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AUTHOR Richardson, Rita C.; Evans, Elizabeth T.
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ABSTRACT

In spite of legislation to eliminate discrimination, attitudes are more difficult to change than behavior. Noting that schools have followed the letter of the law and enforced integration but may have fallen short of adhering to the spirit of the law, this paper explores methods for teaching social and emotional competence within a culturally diverse society. The paper discusses culturally responsive education and the need for educators to focus on building social and emotional competence in children and adolescents. The "Connecting with Others" program designed to assist students in developing interpersonal, intrapersonal, and emotional intelligences, and to develop tolerance and acceptance of differences is described. A sample lesson plan from the program for grades 6-8, entitled "Who Am I?," is appended. The lesson plan focuses on teaching and guided discussion, knowledge monitoring, guided practice, assessment of mastery, independent practice, evaluation and feedback, and enrichment activities. (MDM)

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# Social and Emotional Competence:

# Motivating Cultural Responsive Education

Dr. Rita C. Richardson
Associate Professor,

and

Dr. Elizabeth T. Evans
Professor

Southeastern Louisiana University
Department of Special Education
University Box 879
Hominid, LA 70402

Phone: (504) 549-2214
FAX: (504) 549-3050

E-MAIL: RRICHARDSON@SELU.EDU
EEVANS@SELU.EDU

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**Social and Emotional Competence:**

**Motivating Cultural Responsive Education**

In a pluralistic society the dominant group allows the minority group to maintain their cultural customs as long as they do not conflict with those practices regarded necessary for the subsistence of the society as a whole. The world is increasingly becoming a mosaic of many cultures which adheres to different social mores. These differences often provoke violence and discord. The United States was once considered as one great melting pot where people from all over the world came, mixed and became one people (Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, & Leal, 1996). Black citizens and other minorities were not included in the assimilation. This century has witnessed numerous legislation to eliminate discrimination, but unfortunately mandates do not change attitudes. Schools have followed the letter of the law and enforced integration. However, we have fallen short of adhering to the spirit of the law. This can achieved through education, discussion, and an open mind. Training based on democratic values and appreciation of human diversity is essential for effective assimilation to pluralism. Instruction must be designed to promote recognition and celebration of diverse groups including race, language, ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability.

Changing individuals' attitudes is far more complicated than changing their behavior. A directive change cycle is based on laws and regulations to change the way people react to social situations. For example, the Civil Rights Acts and P.L. 94-142 were laws enacted to end racial discrimination and to include of individuals with disabilities. As a result, these groups were

integrated into society; however, negative attitudes are still evident in numerous circle. Negative attitudes are not conducive to acceptance of differences and they generally promote divisiveness within a society.

A participative change cycle relies on knowledge and empowerment to change attitudes and to promote genuine behavior change. Teaching democratic social skills incorporates a participative change cycle and espouses the philosophy of quality education. Glasser (1992) in his description of quality schools, compares teachers to managers. According to Glasser educators must rely on a democratic lead-management approach rather than a boss-management approach if democracy in the classroom is to prevail. Students can be taught to work together, to cooperate and to collaborate with each other and to increase the quality of their work and their interactions.

Teaching social skills should include inductive and deductive teaching strategies to encourage critical and reflective thinking and. Teaching responsible citizenship is essential for democratic systems to progress. Although individuality is encouraged, responsibility within a social group is considered crucial in celebrating diversity. In other word, we are our brother's or sister's keeper and it is OK to be different and it is OK to be the same.

The search for a homogeneous society, where all the "feeble minded" would be segregated led to a search of an intelligence test to identify those individuals who were unfit to live in a capable and competent society. Unfortunately, this adherence to a single factor of intelligence led to discrimination and injustice. Howard Gardner (1993) has proposed a theory of multiple intelligences, whereby the scope of human potential is broadened beyond the confines of the IQ score. He identified seven intelligences: Logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic, kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal and intrapersonal. He accentuated the latter and proposed that these

intelligences can be nurtured and strengthened.

Positive interpersonal interactions can enhance the quality of life for all children. While logical-mathematical and verbal-linguistic aptitudes are certainly desired for academic and school success, emotional and social competence is also essential for personal accomplishment. Interpersonal intelligence enables an individual to notice distinctions among others. An individual high in this intelligence has the capacity to observe contrasts in the moods of others. This intelligence permits a skilled person to read intentions and desires even when these have not been expressed. Interpersonal intelligence allows one to understand, to be flexible, to problem solve and resolve conflicts. Individuals with high intrapersonal intelligence have viable and practical concept of self (Armstrong, 1994). They are strong in emotional stability and introspection. Intrapersonal intelligence includes having an accurate picture of oneself including strengths and limitations. Skilled persons in this area are aware of personal moods, intentions, motivations, temperaments and desires. They have the capacity for self-discipline, self-understanding, and self-esteem.

Goleman's (1995) definition of emotional intelligence is associated with intrapersonal intelligence. It includes self-awareness, impulse control, persistence, zeal, and self-motivation. Emotional intelligence involves a high level of empathetic and social deftness. These qualities are essential for positive interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal intelligence is described as the ability to read and notice distinction in moods, temperaments, motivation, intentions and feelings of others. A major difference between Goleman's concept of emotional intelligence and Gardener's concept of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences is the attachment of a moral code. Gardener does not include the idea of morality in his definition (Gardener, 1997).

Individuals with high levels of interpersonal intelligence may behave morally or immorally in their personal exchanges. They may convince others to follow their agenda regardless of the outcome.

The construct of emotional intelligence and intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences inspired us to develop a friendship model which eventually activated us to develop an organized program to teach prosocial skills and develop emotional competence (Evans & Richardson, 1987, Richardson, 1996, Richardson & Evans, in press). A model is only as effective as its practical application and implementation. We subsequently identified constructs which would assist us to teach complex cognitive and affective in a teacher friendly and motivating format.

## Lessons to Teach Social and Emotional Competence

The Connecting with Others program was designed to assist students develop interpersonal, intrapersonal and emotional intelligences and to develop tolerance and acceptance of differences. Six areas were developed to teach awareness of self and others, socialization, communication, sharing, empathy and caring. The strategies were developed around a multicultural theme, and cooperative rather than competitive learning is encouraged through group activities. Two volumes of the programs are presently available for children in grades Kindergarten to 2, and for children in grades 3-5.

The lessons are based on three main theories, Cognitive Behavior Modification, Transactional Analysis and Responsible Assertion. These three conceptual models are briefly introduced in a Preliminary Lesson, and are reinforced throughout the program Cognitive Behavior Modification (CBM) procedures are illustrated to teach students to modify their behaviors and to practice delayed gratification. These procedures are based on an internal reward

system as opposed to an external reward system. In CBM activities, teachers model and exemplify self-discipline and critical thinking. Self-regulation skills are stressed through strategies such as verbal mediation self-recording and self-evaluation. The students are taught to use four steps, Stop, Think, Plan and Check in solving problems and in planning alternative solutions.

The basic concepts of Transactional Analysis (T.A.) are taught to help students develop awareness of feelings, attitudes and behaviors, and to clarify personal interactions. Students are introduced to the three Ego States the Parent, the Child and the Adult. These ego states are referred to as attitudes which people assume in different situations and interactions. The Child has two attitudes, the Impulsive Me and the Enthusiastic Me. The Parent also demonstrates two attitudes, the Bossy Me and the Caring Me. The Adult is the Thinking Me and is reflective and adapt in decision making.. The students examine their attitudes in relation to the five attitudes and choose the appropriate attitude in given situations.

Through responsible assertion training, students examine cognitive and affective strategies to advocate for themselves. In addition to direct assertion, empathetic assertion is taught to sensitize students to the feelings and rights of others. By acting assertively students develop self-respect and respect for others. In assertive training students learn to discriminate between assertive, nonassertive and aggressive behaviors. Thinking, feeling and behaving are elements of assertiveness. Assertion training strategies combine cognitive restructuring, acknowledgment of emotions and behavioral rehearsals to empower and give control to individuals.

A program for the middle school grades (6-8) is in progress and will include lessons in eight skill area: awareness of self and others, conflict resolution, responsibility, communication, self-advocacy, group dynamics, altruism, and time management.

The skills in each area are not exclusive or discreet, and often overlap across areas. Teachers are encouraged to be flexible, creative and include additional activities relevant to the students' culture, environment, and situations. The proposed teacher scripts are intended to be used only as guidelines. Teachers are encouraged to use their own dialogue and to engage the students in discussion through questioning and feedback. The program focuses on active learning where students are not passive recipients of knowledge. Many of the activities, such as community involvement, require the students to practice the skills in their community. Each lesson includes a teacher script, to teach defined objectives, activities to provide the students with guided and independent practice, and three evaluation components to measure progress and provide feedback. Activities across various settings, are suggested for generalization and transfer of skills. A summary section is included to synthesize the information. Teachers are encouraged to use relevant examples typical to their region to promote relevancy and interest.

**Conclusion**

The influence of family and school on children's emotional and social development cannot be underestimated. Education plays a key role in shaping children's psychological development. Children can learn to resolve problems assertively and to become empathetic and sensitive. They can become self-discipline by practicing to delay gratification and to regulate their own behaviors. these qualities cannot be achieved through coercive discipline. Punishment may temporarily control behavior, but it does not teach prosocial behavior and it harbors hostility.

Children should be given the opportunities to explore the similarities and differences in customs, attitudes and ideologies of other cultures (Schwartz &Karge, 1996). An understanding of differences can prevent the insensivity that results from ignorance .

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**Sample Lesson**

**I. Skill Area: Awareness of Self and Others: Level: Grades 6-8**

**Lesson 1: Who Am I?**

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Goal #1: To develop personal awareness.

I. OPENING

1. REVIEW

None needed

2. STATE OBJECTIVES

In this lesson we will learn. It is important to recognize and appreciate our personal strengths. It is equally important to recognize our weaknesses and to be able and willing to improve.

**II. INFORMATION**

**1. TEACHING AND GUIDED DISCUSSION**

The middle school years are often very confusing and difficult for many students. Can you tell me why? (Elicit responses and discuss). Adolescence is a critical period of time because you are growing physically and emotionally. Your bodies change as well as your feelings. But most important the way you feel about yourself will determine your attitudes and behavior. Will you adopt a positive and healthy attitude and will you behave with confidence and develop a healthy self-concept. It is not unusual for teens to question past values, or to become unsure of themselves. Am

I pretty or handsome enough, am I smart enough and will I be accepted by the group? Many teenagers often give in to peer pressure because they lack self-confidence. Yet other teenagers value being their own person, and march to the tune of a different drummer. What does that mean? (Elicit responses and discuss).

You have different strengths and talents. I think one of my special talents is. I'm good at_____, and my nephew is good at playing baseball and my niece makes straight A's in math. Most people think intelligence is being smart in academic subjects (English, Math, History, and so on). What does it mean to be intelligent? (Elicit responses). Intelligence means being able and willing to excel at something, and this involves personal strengths Actually, there are many kinds of intelligences. A psychologist named Howard Gardener identified seven kinds of intelligences, they are: logical/ mathematical (scientific thinking, mathematical abilities), visual/spatial (artistic abilities, finding your way in space) body/kinesthetic( athletic abilities, dancing abilities) musical/ rhythmic (musical abilities), interpersonal (person to person relationships), intrapersonal (self-reflection, self-awareness) and verbal/linguistic. Some people may be very intelligent in math and science (logical-mathematical) but cannot get along with other people (interpersonal). Some people have problems reading but are great musicians or artist. An I.Q. score does not measure all the intelligences. Our attitudes affect how we use our personal intelligence. An Enthusiastic Me attitude and a Thinking Me attitude can help in developing many intelligences within us. We all have many different strengths. You can develop your strengths, but first you need to recognize what they are. What do you think are your strengths? (Elicit responses and discuss). When we recognize our strengths we feel like winners and feel good about ourselves. Nobody is perfect, but we sometimes use an Impulsive Me attitude or a Bossy Me attitude to put ourselves down and then we feel sorry for ourselves. Before

we allow self-pity to get the best of us, we must use the Thinking Steps, STOP, THINK, PLAN and CHECK to stop our self-pity and to think and discover our strengths.

Nobody is perfect and we all have certain weaknesses. (Give a personal example) I like to sing, but I don't have a good singing voice. I also have difficulty getting to places on time. My first weakness does not interfere with my life, but my second weakness often gets me in trouble, because it upsets other people in my work and personal situations. (Explain). There are people who have difficulty controlling their temper. How can that cause trouble? (Elicit responses and discuss). It is difficult to admit that we have weaknesses, because of pride or because it may be painful. To avoid pain we get on the defensive. We refuse to acknowledge our weaknesses and make excuses. Before making excuses we need to STOP, THINK, PLAN, and CHECK. Are we being honest with ourselves? Remember the first step to improving is to recognize our weaknesses.

We can improve our weaknesses through careful planning and checking our plan. If we have difficulty getting along with others than we need to work on our interpersonal intelligence. We can't all be great athletes, singers, artists or mathematicians but we can improve on getting along, that's very a important intelligence to nurture because it will affect the rest of our lives. We can also improve the other intelligences through work and practice. What can you do to improve your strengths and weakness? (Elicit responses and discuss). By improving our weaknesses we develop confidence and self-esteem. Self-esteem indicates the way you think about yourself and the way you feel about yourself. Do you like the way you look? Do you perceive yourself to be awkward or graceful? Do you wish you looked differently. A positive self-esteem is important no matter your age, gender or ethnicity. It affects every aspect of your life. Do you remember discussing assertive, non-assertive and aggressive behaviors ? Which person is likely to have the healthiest self-esteem?

(Elicit responses and discuss). People with poor self-esteem often experience failure because they may not be motivated or willing to try. They are easily influenced by others because they lack self-confidence. They feel de-valued, defensive and easily frustrated.

**2. MONITOR KNOWLEDGE**

Ask the following questions.

A. Why are the teenage years a time for discovery?

B. Paul is not very good at math, but he can write poetry and play the piano. Kinesia loves to study the stars and planets and enjoys being with people. What are their intelligences (strengths).

C. Raftage lives in Seattle. He is good at math but has difficulty understanding the English language. He is also poor at playing tennis. Which of his weaknesses should he try to improve first?

D. Develop a short plan to help Raftage with his primary weakness?

**3. GUIDED PRACTICE**

A. Acrostic Exercise:

. Direct the students to write their names horizontally on a sheet of paper and to write a positive self-affirmation or a strength beginning with the first letter of their name.

Example: Mindy

**M** **Me**, I am a precious gift

**I** **I** like the way I am

**N** **N**ever will I put myself down

**D** **D**eep in my heart, I know I can do, I

**Y** **Y**earn to grow in self-esteem

**or**

**M** is for my **marvelous** talents

**I** is for my **interesting** conversations

**D** is for my **devotion** to family & friends

**N** is for my **nice** personality

**Y** is for my **yes** and positive attitude

B. Guide the students in assembling a personal portfolio. Decide as a group what should be included in the portfolio. The portfolio should reflect the student's unique abilities and personalities. It could be assembled in a large binder or a box. Contents could include academic work, personal contributions, photographs, videos, audio cassettes, art work, poetry, journals, creative writing etc.

**4. ASSESS MASTERY**

Self-Understanding: Which Me attitude is showing in the following statements.

If I study, I know I can pass the test, I'm smart (Thinking Me)

I should be ashamed of myself for... (Bossy Me).

This is fun, I am great at shooting baskets (Enthusiastic Me).

I may not be good at sports but I'm an O.K. person (Caring Me).

I'm a real loser, everyone is better than I am. (Impulsive Me).

I'll ask Jake to tutor me in Math, I know I can do it. (Thinking Me).

I am so lazy, I really should stop fooling around (Bossy Me).

I may not be an A student but I get along with people (Thinking Me)

I'll help the new kid in school to get around (Thinking Me).

**III. RETEACH**

**1. INDEPENDENT PRACTICE**

Direct the students to write an essay or record on an audio tape. In the essay/tape, the students are told to evaluate their strengths, their weaknesses and plans for improvement.

**2. EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK**

A. Evaluate the essays and give individual feedback through writing or a personal conference.

B. Ask each student to make a positive "I Can" statement.

**3. ENRICHMENT**

A. Discuss the following quotation and develop a Proverb Bulletin Board.

. To thine own self be true

And it must follow as the night the day,

Thou canst not then be false to any man. William Shakespeare

. Every person has the right to feel that "because of me was the world created." Talmud

. I am **somebody!** I may be poor -- but I am **somebody!**

I may be in prison -- but I am **somebody!**

I may be uneducated -- but I am **somebody!** Jesse Jackson

. As you love yourself, so shall you love others. Strange but true, but with no exceptions.

Harry Stack Sullivan

. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Mark 12:29

. No one can make you feel inferior without your consent Eleanor Roosevelt

. I own me, and therefore I can engineer me I am me and I am okay. Virginia Satir

. Believe in yourself and what others think won't matter. Ralph Waldo Emmerson

. You are surrounded by hundreds of people more timid than you are. Edward S. Martin

B. Direct the students to sit in a circle. Ask students to take turns and make positive statements about their neighbor to their right. The teacher may model the activity to break the ice.

Follow this activity with an art project. Direct the students to make a sticker button stating their neighbor's good quality.

Example: Ruth is O.K. Fred is fabulous. Hilda is a Computer Whiz.

C. Develop a Proverb poster or a proverb bulletin board and ask students to contribute to the board. They can compose their own proverbs.

**IV. CLOSING**

**1. SUMMARY**

In this lesson we learned that the early teen years are difficult years because young people are looking for an identity. We all have special strengths. We can improve our weaknesses through careful planning and work.

**2. GENERALIZATION**

Direct students to write their autobiography. Correct their first draft and encourage the students, if possible, to type their finished products on a computer. They may illustrate moments in their lives by scanning photographs of themselves and their family and friends. If a scanner is not available, recommend to the students to illustrate their autobiographies with snapshots of family and friends.